

URBAN WILDLAND INTERFACE BUILDING STANDARDS

EXPRESS TERMS FOR

PROPOSED BUILDING STANDARDS

OF THE STATE FIRE MARSHAL (SFM)

REGARDING PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE 2001 CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE CALIFORNIA CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 24

{These building standards are proposed under HSC 17921 that authorizes the SFM to propose building standards for fire and panic safety in all hotels, motels, lodging houses, apartment houses and dwellings, buildings, and structures accessory thereto. The standards proposed hereunder are to be applicable in certain areas of the State with identified wildland fire hazards, as defined in the regulations. The standards proposed herein shall provide fire protection for exterior walls and wall projections, ancillary structures such as decks, and structure openings including doors and windows of buildings.

At this time, the SFM is proposing to add Chapter 7A to the California Building Code with a combination of prescriptive and performance-based standards that will provide fire protection for exterior walls, windows and structure projections such as decks. New fire performance testing standards have been developed by researchers at the University of California Forest Products Laboratory in consultation with the SFM. These standards, as applicable, will be proposed for addition by reference to Part 12 of the California Building Code as SFM adopted standards.

AB 1216 (Vargas), an act to amend Section 51189 of the Government Code, and to amend Section 13108.5 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to fire safety is currently awaiting signature by Governor Davis. AB 1216 would require the SFM, no later than January 1, 2005, to recommend building standards that provide for comprehensive space and structure defensibility to protect structures from fires spreading from adjacent structures or vegetation and vegetation from fires spreading from adjacent structures.}

Chapter 7A

FIRE-RESISTANT MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS USED IN AREAS WITH WILDLAND FIRE HAZARDS

SECTION 701A-GENERAL

701.1 Scope. This chapter applies to building materials and systems used in the exterior design and construction of buildings to provide for comprehensive space and structure defensibility to protect structures from fires spreading from adjacent structures or vegetation and vegetation from fires spreading from adjacent structures.

The scope of these provisions shall apply to buildings in fire hazard severity zones, including very high fire hazard severity zones designated by the Director of Forestry and Fire Protection pursuant to Article 9 (commencing with Section 4201) of Chapter 1 of Part 2 of Division 4 of the Public Resources Code.

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These provisions shall also apply to buildings located in very high fire hazard severity zones designated pursuant to Chapter 6.8 (commencing with Section 51175) of Part 1 of Division 1 of Title 5 of the Government Code, and other areas designated by a local agency following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record that the requirements of the building standards adopted pursuant to this section are necessary for effective fire protection within the area.

These provisions shall also apply to buildings located in urban wildland interface communities. A local agency may, at its discretion, include in or exclude from the requirements of these building standards any area in its jurisdiction following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record at a public hearing that the requirements of these building standards are necessary or not necessary, respectively, for effective fire protection within the area. Changes made by a local agency to an urban wildland interface community area following a finding supported by substantial evidence in the record shall be final and shall not be rebuttable.

701.2 Purpose. These standards include but are not limited to measures that increase the likelihood of a building or structure to withstand intrusion by fire, such as building design and construction requirements that use fire resistant building materials and provide protection of structure projections including porches, decks, balconies and eaves, and structure openings including attic and eave vents and windows.

SECTION 702A-DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this chapter, the terms, phrases and words listed in this section and their derivatives shall have the indicated meanings.

Firebrand: A burning ember produced by wildfire that are lifted high into the air and carried beyond the fire front. Typical firebrand materials include pieces of burning vegetation, and, if houses are involved wood shakes or shingles.

Urban wildland interface community: a community listed in "Communities at Risk from Wild Fires," produced by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Fire And Resource Assessment Program, pursuant to the National Fire Plan, federal Fiscal Year 2001 Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act (Public Law 106-291).

SECTION 703A-FIRE RESISTANT MATERIALS AND SYSTEMS

703A.1 General.

Materials and systems used for fire-resistant purposes shall be limited to those accepted under test procedures set forth in Section 703A.2.

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Alternate fire-resistant materials, assemblies and construction methods maybe approved by the building official on the basis of evidence submitted showing that the construction meets the required fire resistant performance criteria.

703A.2 Qualification By Testing

Material and material assemblies tested in accordance with the requirements set forth in 703A.3 shall be accepted for use in accordance with the results and conditions of such tests.

703A.3 Standards of Quality.

The UCFPL standards listed below are also listed in Chapter 35 and in Part 12 and are part of this code.

[For SFM] The standards listed below are adopted by the State Fire Marshal.

1. 12-7A-1 "Exterior Wall Siding and Sheathing, Direct Flame Exposure"
2. 12-7A-2 "Exterior Windows, Direct Flame Exposure"
4. 12-7A-3 "Unloaded Deck, Direct Flame Exposure"
5. 12-7A-4 "Unloaded Deck, Burning Brand Exposure"

SECTION 704A – EXTERIOR WALLS

704A.1 General.

Exterior wall assemblies shall meet the requirements set forth in Chapter 7, Section 709.

704A.2 Exterior Siding.

Exterior siding and sheathing assemblies shall meet the requirements of standard 12-7A-1. The assembly, its component materials and configuration shall not permit the intrusion of flames, embers or radiant heat into the interior of the structure or contribute to the spread of fire to other building components. Exterior siding and sheathing materials used shall not contribute to the production of firebrands.

704A.3 Exterior Wall Openings.

Exterior wall openings shall not permit the intrusion of flames, embers or radiant heat into the interior of the structure or contribute to the spread of fire to other building components.

704A.3.1 Windows

Exterior window assemblies shall meet the requirements of standard 12-7A-2 and shall not permit the intrusion of flames, embers or radiant heat into the interior of the structure or contribute to the spread of fire to other building components.

704A.3.2 Doors

Exterior door assemblies shall meet the requirements of standard 12-7A-1 and shall not permit the intrusion of flames, embers or radiant heat into the interior of the structure or contribute to the spread of fire to other building components.

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704A.3.3 Wall Vents

Eave, crawlspace and exhaust vents shall not permit the intrusion of embers and flames into the interior of the structure.

704A.4 Exterior Wall Projections

Exterior wall projections shall provide fire protection equivalent to that provided by the required exterior wall assembly and shall not contribute to the production of firebrands.

705A. ANCILLARY STRUCTURES

705A.1 General.

Ancillary structures, including but not limited to carports, decks, patio covers and fences shall not contribute to the spread of fire to other building components or contribute to the production of firebrands.

705A1.1 Decks.

Deck assemblies shall meet the requirements of standards 12-7A-3 and 12-7A-4 and shall not contribute to the spread of fire to other building components or to the production of firebrands.

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